

WE CLAIM:

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1 An information system under affective control, comprising:
2 an application program with which a user is actively engaged;
3 means for determining the apparent affective state of the user; and
4 means for changing the operation of the application program responsive to the
5 apparent affective state of the user.

1 2. An information system under affective control as in claim 1, wherein
2 said means for determining the apparent affective state of the user comprises a means
3 responsive to at least one of user autonomic indicators and the facial expression of
4 the user.

1 3. An information system under affective control as in claim 1, wherein
2 said application program comprises means of user input.

1 4. An information system under affective control as in claim 3, wherein
2 said means for determining the apparent affective state of the user comprises a
3 means responsive to at least one of user input characteristics and input content.

1 5. An information system under affective control as in claim 3, wherein
2 said user input is text.

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1 6. An information system under affective control as in claim 5, wherein
2 said means for changing the operation of the application program
3 comprises means for marking text if the apparent emotional state of the writer indicates
4 that the text should be marked.

1 7. An information system under affective control as in claim 1, wherein
2 said application program is a program for transmission to others of text composed
3 by the user.

1 8. An information system under affective control as in claim 7, wherein
2 said means for changing the operation of the application program
3 comprises means for prompting the user to confirm the desired transmission of text if the
4 apparent emotional state of the writer is questionable, means for receiving the user's
5 response, and means for transmitting only on receipt of affirmative response.

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1 9. A method of processing text indicating the emotional state of the writer at the time of
2 writing, comprising the steps of:

3 (a) accepting text input from the writer;

4 (b) determining the apparent emotional state of the writer;

5 (c) marking text if the apparent emotional state of the writer indicates that the text
6 should be marked; and

7 BI (d) outputting marked text, thereby indicating the apparent emotional state of the
8 writer.

1 10. The method of processing text as set forth in claim 9, wherein said step of
2 determining the apparent emotional state of the writer is performed by monitoring at least
3 one of the writer's text input characteristics, text content, writer autonomic indicators and
4 the facial expression of the writer.

1 11. The method of processing text as set forth in claim 9, wherein said step of
2 accepting text input from the writer comprises receiving text manually input by the writer
3 into a text input device and said step of determining the apparent emotional state of the
4 writer is performed at least in part by determining the force used by the writer in
5 manually inputting text into the input device.

1 12. The method of processing text as set forth in claim 9, wherein said step of
2 accepting text input from the writer comprises speech input by the writer and said step of
3 determining the apparent emotional state of the writer is performed at least in part by
4 analyzing the characteristics of the writer's speech input.

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1 13. A method of conditional transmission of a message to at least one recipient based
2 upon the apparent emotional state of the writer, comprising the steps of

- 3 (a) receiving an instruction to transmit a message from a writer;
4 (b) determining the apparent emotional state of the writer;
5 (c) if the apparent emotional state of the writer is questionable, warning the writer and
6 prompting the writer to confirm that the message should be sent;
7 (d) allowing transmission of the message only upon confirmation by the writer that
8 the first message should be sent.

1 14. The method of conditional transmission of a message according to claim 13,
2 wherein said step of determining the apparent emotional state of the writer comprises
3 analyzing at least one of the intended recipients of the message, message content, writer
4 autonomic indicators and the facial expression of the writer.
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15. A method of receiving and conditionally responding to a received message based upon the apparent emotional state of the respondent, comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving a message;
- (b) presenting the received message to a respondent;
- (c) receiving a proposed response to the received message from the respondent along with a request to transmit the proposed response to proposed recipients;
- (d) determining the emotional state of the respondent;
- (e) if the apparent emotional state of the respondent is questionable, warning the respondent and prompting the respondent to confirm that the proposed response should be sent to the proposed recipients; and
- (f) allowing transmission of the response to the recipients only upon confirmation by the respondent that the response should be sent to the recipients.

16. The method of receiving and conditionally responding to a received message according to claim 15, wherein said step of determining the apparent emotional state of the writer comprises analyzing the time elapsed between the step of presenting the received message to the respondent and the step of receiving a proposed response to the received message.

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17. A method of conditional transmission of a message to at least one recipient based upon the apparent emotional state of the writer, comprising the steps of

(a) receiving a proposed message from a writer along with a request to transmit the proposed message to proposed recipients;

(b) determining the emotional state of the writer;

(c) if the apparent emotional state of the writer is questionable, warning the writer and prompting the writer to confirm that the proposed message should be sent to the proposed recipients; and

(d) allowing transmission of the message to the recipients only upon confirmation by the writer that the message should be sent to the recipients.

18. The method of conditional transmission of a message according to claim 17, wherein said step of receiving a proposed message comprises monitoring the input characteristics of the writer and said step of determining the emotional state of the writer comprises analyzing the input characteristics of the writer.

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